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1961-01-01, Bette to Parents

Bette J. Barto

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Subject Terms

Women and the military, Women and war, United States -- Air Force, United States -- Army -- Air Forces, Photographs, Armed Forces -- Correspondence, Correspondence -- Vietnam War -- 1961-1975, Christmas

Summary

This collection contains 139 correspondence from Maj. Bette J. Barto, USAFE to her parents while serving as a nurse during the late 1950s and 1960s. Also included are three photographs, one special orders document, and one marriage license. In several cases, Bette refers to her parents as "Lizzie" and "Hugh Elmer," or simply "Elmer." Three letters from 1961 or 1962 are undated and placed in a separate folder.

Keywords

1961-01-01, New Years

Identifier

2017-219-w-r-_Barto_ColdWar_1961-01-01

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1 January 1961

11 pm

Happy New Year, Mom, and Elmer,

I had a lovely New Year's Eve Day with a letter from you and a big happy & fat one from my husband. He evidently was trying to make up for all the ones he tore up while waiting for my orders to come through. Poor honey, he's had a bad time of it too. I hope all goes well with us now. We won't have a house right away, it looks like; we're still #7 on the list. I don't mind, because most of my stuff won't leave here until next Friday and since it will come by boat, it usually takes about 2 weeks. We'll make out alright anywhere as long as we're together!

I'm due to leave here on Monday 16 Jan. at 2:45 pm (that's 7 am your time, I guess) and I should be in Charleston

about 24-30 hours later. This, of course, can change from hour-to-hour due to weather and so on; so don't start fretting until you hear from me. If a miracle occurs, I might even make it sooner, but I'm not getting my hopes up. I've made it thus far; I can do 15 more days with no sweat! Ray didn't say if you planned to come to Charleston to meet me with him, Mom, but I figured you might not yet feel up to the trip; so, if you don't, I'll call you as soon as I'm on the USA soil, and will see you shortly thereafter. I don't believe it yet; I've waited so hard. I didn't even believe it when I saw the orders cut and half my belongings leave the other day as hold-baggage.

I hope you have received your Christmas by now. Two of the other girls parents haven't gotten theirs

yet either. In case you don't, I had given you ① a yellow Charlie Tigarde & yellow Knitted shoes to match. ② a tooled leather writing portfolio with paper in all. ③ a set of real waxy beads made like tulip buds with earrings to match and ④ an outdoor thermometer for Elmer to replace his old ugly porch thermometer. I think 'that's' all; for I saved your other present thinking I'd bring it myself. Now I'm unable to carry all I have left; so I'll put it with my household goods. I have you a beautiful, hand-made camel-hide handbag - big as you like.

Anne, my best buddy, had a bit of really sad news. Her folks were on their way to Florida to spend Christmas and someone broke into their station-wagon and stole all their gifts from Anne. It included a movie camera & pictures we spent ages taking for her Daddy. They & she were just sick.

I reuse the paper. I'm using up scraps now - 'bout to rotate! I used all my coffee today, started using hospital towels yesterday; so I can ship mine clean. From here on out, I'm a bum. I'm wearing my roommate's uniforms and have to unpack, nearly, to change under-clothing! You think I'm not ready to get out of North Africa?

Gotta stop and get some sleep, I worked on clothes all day and didn't get any black-eyed peas - this ain't a place fit for Southerners; so I'm coming home!

Gotta walk 5-6 more days before I bug out of dis place.

Happy N. Year and
see you very soon -
Love you,
Betty